



## Ideas Exchange

### Jumping on the wiki bandwagon with ‘Google docs’

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**Abstract:** *The Wiki is often overlooked as an educational/research tool due to the indifference or uncertainty of potential users. Google docs offers an uncomplicated introduction to the world of Wiki's. Designed to facilitate collaborations, it allows students, educators and researchers to take immediate advantage of the benefits offered by Wiki technology without the hassle.*

*Join in a discussion on the benefits and pitfalls with using these types of tools and the varied ways in which they can be utilised in teaching and learning as well as research collaborations*

### Cementing Core Concepts with Crafty Constructions

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**Abstract:** *Second year Metabolism and third year Immunology at Griffith University are subjects where a concrete understanding of central concepts is imperative to mastering the complex mechanisms and pathways these topics encompass. The use of traditional teaching methods frequently leaves students seemingly unable to grasp these more difficult concepts due to gaps in their basic understanding of how 3D molecules interact in the environment. To overcome this fundamental issue, craft materials such as plasticine, pipe cleaners and pony beads were introduced to small group workshop classes early in semester. In metabolism, activities focused on basic molecular rearrangement and carbon tracking in the central metabolic pathways. In immunology we developed activities that highlight basic molecular structures of immune system components and the fundamental interactions these molecules have. Our anecdotal evidence suggests that these activities are particularly good at engaging all types of pedagogical learning styles, but particularly kinaesthetic and visual learners who make up about 70% of the student body. Students in general appeared to gain a more substantial comprehension of foundation concepts leading to greater success and deeper learning of more complex concepts later in the course. An additional benefit was the ease with which facilitators could quickly identify and correct fundamental flaws in student understanding of critical content concepts based on the models they created.*